

Message Text

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13-12
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 TRSE-00 COME-00 EB-07 STR-04 AGR-05

AGRE-00 IO-13 OMB-01 /111 W
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P 160703Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6248
INFO USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 4436

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, KU, EFIN, ETRD
SUBJECT: FINANCE MINISTER ATEEQI INTERVIEW WITH WASHINGTON
POST CORRESPONDENT

REF: (A) KUWAIT 3825, (B) STATE 184632

1. THINKING THAT THE LIPPMAN ASKING FOR AN INTERVIEW WAS
WALTER LIPPMANN, KUWAIT FINANCE MINISTER ATEEQI AGREED TO
SEE CAIRO-BASED WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT TOM LIPPMAN
ON FEW HOURS NOTICE SEPT. 15. ATEEQI WAS NOT PLEASED
WHEN THE THIRTYISH POST REPORTER WALKED INTO HIS OFFICE, BUT
TALKED AT LENGTH ANYWAY (WITH A RECORDER GOING, BECAUSE,
ATEEQI COMPLAINED THAT HE HAD BEEN MISQUOTED IN THE PAST).
LIPPMAN PLANS TO FILE STORY AND PROVIDED EMBOFF
WITH FOLLOWING HIGHLIGHTS:

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2. BOYCOTT -- ATEEQI TOOK POSITION THAT ONLY PARTY WHICH

WOULD BE HURT BY PLETHORA OF ANTI-BOYCOTT MEASURES BEFORE CONGRESS WOULD BE U.S. IF AMERICAN FIRMS COULD NOT EXPORT TO KUWAIT BECAUSE OF ANTI-BOYCOTT LEGISLATION, KUWAIT WOULD SIMPLY SHOP ELSEWHERE. "YOU (THE U.S.) DECIDE WHERE YOUR INTERESTS ARE," ATEEQI REPORTEDLY SAID. "OTHER COUNTRIES WILL BENEFIT FROM WHAT YOU LOSE."

3. IMF/IBRD MANILA MEETINGS -- ATEEQI TOLD LIPPMAN THAT KUWAIT'S MAIN CONCERN AT MANILA WOULD BE TO INSURE THAT THE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES FULFILL COMMITMENTS FOR THE REPLENISHMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (IDA); THAT IDA PROVIDE MORE SOFT LOANS FOR LDCS; AND THAT THE U.S. AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, WHICH "MISSED OUT" ON THE FIRST "THIRD WINDOW" PROPOSAL, NOT DO SO ON A SECOND ONE. THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES -- THE U.S., FRG, AND JAPAN -- SHOULD CONTRIBUTE MORE TO RELIEVE THE HEAVY INTEREST BURDEN BORNE BY THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, ATEEQI QUOTED AS SAYING.

4. IFAD -- IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, ATEEQI SAID HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY 20 INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES COULD NOT COME UP WITH \$600 MILLION. IT IS ABSURD, ATEEQI SAID, THAT A TINY COUNTRY LIKE QATAR GIVES \$20 MILLION, AND A COUNTRY 100 TIMES ITS SIZE LIKE JAPAN CAN ONLY COME UP WITH \$50 MILLION. SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY U.S. AND JAPAN "HAGGLING" OVER SUCH MINISCULE AMOUNTS, ATEEQI SAID THERE WAS NO POINT IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION, SINCE OPEC'S DECISION NOT TO GO ABOVE \$400 MILLION PARTICIPATION HAD BEEN MADE AND COULD NOT BE CHANGED.

5. EGYPT -- IN AN INTERVIEW EARLIER IN SEPTEMBER THE IRAQI PLANNING MINISTER COMPLAINED TO LIPPMAN THAT RICH ARAB COUNTRIES SUCH AS KUWAIT INVEST THEIR MONEY IN "IMPERIALIST COUNTRIES" SUCH AS THE U.S., RATHER THAN THE ARAB WORLD. WHAT DID ATEEQI THINK OF THE REMARK? LIPPMAN ASKED. BRISTLING, ATEEQI SAID KUWAIT HAD BEEN HELPING AND INVESTING IN THE ARAB WORLD FOR YEARS. IF IRAQ FELT SO STRONGLY ABOUT INTER-ARAB INVESTMENT, THEY WERE WELCOME TO TRY THEIR LUCK IN EGYPT. KUWAIT HAD BEEN GIVING THE

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EGYPTIANS BLANK CHECKS FOR YEARS, BUT THIS COULD NOT GO ON FOREVER. INVESTMENT SHOULD TAKE PLACE, BUT IT WAS NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DO SO, GIVEN EGYPT'S ACTUAL HANDLING OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT. IT WAS UNFAIR TO COMPLAIN THAT KUWAIT WAS NOT DOING ENOUGH FOR EGYPT. KUWAIT HAD DONE A GREAT DEAL, AND IN ANY EVENT, ATEEQI REPORTEDLY SAID, REAL REASON FOR EGYPT'S TROUBLES IS U.S. ATEEQI QUOTED AS SAYING, "I CONSIDER U.S. EGYPT'S NUMBER ONE ENEMY" ... "HOW

CAN ONE COMPARE U.S. AID TO EGYPT TO THE DAMAGE THE U.S.
HAS DONE TO EGYPT THROUGH ITS SUPPORT OF ISRAEL?"

6. RECENT KUWAIT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS -- ATEEQI TOLD
LIPPMAN THAT DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE
ASSEMBLY ONLY DELAYED MEASURES IMPORTANT FOR KUWAIT'S
DEVELOPMENT, SUCH AS THE NATIONAL BUDGET. IN ANSWER TO
LIPPMAN'S QUESTION, ATEEQI SAID RECENT CHANGES WOULD HAVE
NO EFFECT ON KUWAIT'S DEVELOPMENT OR INVESTMENT POLICIES.

7. COMMENT: LIPPMAN TOLD EMBOFF HE LIKELY USE ONLY THOSE ATEEQI
COMMENTS RELATING TO BOYCOTT, EGYPT, AND IMF/IBRD MEETINGS.
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